

Stearns (John)

PHILOSOPHY OF MIND,

DEVELOPING

NEW SOURCES OF IDEAS,

DESIGNATING

THEIR DISTINCTIVE CLASSES,

AND SIMPLIFYING THE

FACULTIES AND OPERATIONS OF THE WHOLE MIND.

BY JOHN STEARNS, M. D.

OF THE CITY OF NEW-YORK,
Late President of the Medical Society of the State.

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NEW PHILOSOPHY OF MIND.

PHILOSOPHERS may investigate the arcana of nature, and designate the laws by which those wonderful phenomena are produced, which astonish and intimidate vulgar minds ; they may annihilate space, and approximate antipodes into a familiar circle of friends and neighbors ; meteorologists may trace vapors to their conversion into clouds, and to their descent in rain, and by an accurate imitation of the operations of nature, may produce artificial showers, and locate the gorgeous bow in its appropriate element ; the electrician may disarm the clouds of their thunder, and conduct the forked lightning in harmless streams to his receivers ; the astronomer may elevate his views to the heavens, survey the extent of this vast expanse ; trace the movements of the celestial bodies through their respective orbs ; ascertain, with great accuracy, their magnitudes, their distances, and their periodical revolutions ; describe the paths of the erratic comets ; demonstrate their use in connecting innumerable unknown systems, their approximation to their respective suns, and their rapid divergency into infinite space ; controlling the movements of each system in one grand harmonious compound, and preserving in perfect order every part of this vast, this complicated machinery. But what are all these objects, sublime and magnificent as they may be, compared with the sovereign of this world, the master-piece of creation ; the consummate perfection of the last day's work ; the keystone that completes the arch of the universe ; for whose happiness this magnificent work was conceived and executed in the councils of heaven !

The adequate discussion of a subject so important, so sublime, and replete with such intense interest, requires a pen plucked from an angel's wing, and a mind long and assiduously directed to the study of man, in all the mysterious combinations of his material and immaterial parts.

I purpose, in the present essay, to occupy the reader's attention with a few brief remarks on the immaterial part of man. My

selection of this topic has been influenced by a desire to excite the attention of the Medical Faculty, more particularly, to the study of the human mind, and in a few preliminary remarks, I shall demonstrate its practical importance to the physician, by showing the influence which it exerts upon the body.

Dr. RUSH observes: 'It is the duty of physicians to assert their prerogative, and to rescue mental science from the usurpations of school-men. It can only be perfected by the aid and discoveries of medicine. A knowledge of the functions and operations of the mind is useful to the physician in the study of physiology, hygiene, pathology, and in the practice of medicine. It furnishes many useful analogies by which we can explain and illustrate the functions of the body.

'Is the will influenced by motives? So the body is influenced by external and internal impressions. Is the will destitute of a self-determining power? So the body is devoid of an independent principle of life. Both are influenced by associations and habits, and both equally require repose, after active exertion.' This knowledge also enables us to develop the causes of disease, and to preserve a regular exercise of the faculties and operations of the mind, so as to prevent disease, arising from their torpor, or from their undue exercise. A physician destitute of this knowledge, is a very incompetent judge of the influence which the mind exerts upon the body, in the production and cure of diseases; nor can he avail himself of a remedy more efficacious than the most potent article of the *materia medica*.

Dr. REID justly remarks, that 'all such practitioners are like a surgeon, who, while he secures one artery, suffers his patient to bleed to death by another.' Before the fall of man, his mind was pure, holy, and perfectly equal and regular in all its operations upon the body, which it animated and sustained in perfect health. Such a perfection of mind and body, justly balanced in all their reciprocal operations, was destined to endure for ever in the perfect enjoyment of that unalloyed felicity which is known only to the inhabitants of paradise. Exempt from disease, and undisturbed by inordinate passions, this harmonious compound flourished in the health and vigor of youth, until a poison, artfully infused into the mind, contaminated the body with pain, disease, and death. The effects of this infection were evinced in the conviction of shame and guilt which our first parents instantly exhibited; and also in that depravity of mind, thereby induced, which caused such an unequal operation of the passions and faculties, as to affect the body with disease, and an immediate and direct tendency to its destruction. At that moment

it began to die. This was therefore the primary source of all the diseases which subsequently afflicted mankind.

Although the seeds of dissolution thus planted in man, by the act of disobedience, proved the literal execution of the threat, 'in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die,' they did not produce their mature and ultimate effect in abbreviating human life, until after that most corrupt period of the world, which immediately preceded the general deluge.

Experience and revelation afford ample evidence, that a life of virtue is necessarily connected with moral happiness. If such a life were perpetuated through a lineal succession of generations, it would probably restore that beauty, health, and felicity, which man lost when he was expelled from paradise.

That mental depravity produces not only disease of body and of mind, but also corporeal deformity, is sustained by common observation, and may also be inferred from that Jewish law, which precluded deformed persons from performing, and consequently from profaning, the holy rites of the priesthood, and which also prohibited the oblation of all animals with similar defects.

This position is sustained by tracing a similar connection between virtue and corporeal beauty, even to its figurative perfection in Deity, and to its visible exemplification in the body of Christ, which was represented by his contemporaries to have been exquisitely beautiful. It is for this reason, that beautiful objects excite the most ardent affections of the heart, which always increase as those objects approximate the perfection of beauty. The propriety of this affection, and its necessary connection with our happiness, are susceptible of mathematical demonstration. The soul which exerts such mighty powers upon this mass of inert matter, must, by its continued operation, produce an impress deep and durable as existence.

This subject is replete with sublime contemplations, which excite our astonishment, as we approach the unexplored region of a world of spirits, and behold the immensity of power which they exert. This region I now propose to enter, and to consider more minutely the immaterial part of man. But I cannot approach the confines of this immaterial world, without first invoking the guidance of that spirit of truth, which controls its destinies, and which reveals to man occasional glimpses of its glorious mysteries.

Although some of the views which I may suggest on this obscure, this abstruse topic, may be novel, and at variance with opinions heretofore expressed by metaphysical writers, I trust they will be sustained by reason and by facts.

In approaching this branch of my subject, I feel as if I were treading on consecrated ground, and inspired with a reverential awe at the presumptive efforts to explore a field so mysterious, without a single ray to illumine my darkened path. In making any new suggestions on a subject so important, and so much discussed, I am not insensible to the imputation of presumption that I may justly incur, for attempting to innovate upon the established theories of such giants in metaphysical science, as Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, Locke, Reid, Stewart, Brown, and a host of others, whose publications have excited the admiration of the scientific world, and which have been successively adopted as oracles of truth. I am also aware of the irresistible influence of prejudice, and the pride of opinion, which array many scientific professors against contemporaneous innovators. The innovations of a Gallileo, a Harvey, and a Rush, were repudiated, and they denounced as unworthy of confidence, until their last rival contemporary had passed into oblivion.

Posterity has done them justice. The tongue of envy and jealousy having been paralyzed in death, other tongues became vocal to their honor, and eulogized them as benefactors of mankind. These instances exemplify the natural disposition of man to assail innovators in science; and from the asperity of that censorious spirit, I have no expectation nor desire to be exempt. I trust the remarks of the critic, whether breathing the spirit of censure or of praise, will be equally useful to direct my future course through this trackless ocean. Like the intrepid mariner, voyaging for the discovery of a new world, amidst obstacles the most appalling, I shall persevere in my onward course of investigation, until the light of truth, from some distant isle, shall dissipate all doubts, and with unerring indications of ultimate success, shall excite to renewed energies, or the limitless and lowering expanse in prospect shall preclude the hope of all future discoveries.

Ever since the time of Aristotle, writers on mental science have considered man as a compound being, consisting of two distinct parts, mind and matter, or material and immaterial. In all their discussions, they have identified the soul with the mind. This confusion of terms, this indiscriminate use of soul and mind, to express the same entity, has led to a correspondent obscurity in all the efforts to explain the origin of ideas.

It will be my primary object to designate the error of this hypothetical philosophy, the consequent erroneous deductions relative to the operations of mind, the origin of ideas, and the various results of premises founded upon a philosophy at variance with the inductive

system of BACON. The revolution which this practical philosopher introduced, has never been extended to improve the science of metaphysics, except that branch which relates to the mind, in connection with the modern system of phrenology. It may be replied, that immaterial entities are unsusceptible of demonstrative proof deduced from positive facts. But this will not justify the departure from approved authorities, and the substitution of theories drawn entirely from creative imaginations.

The physical parts of man have, from the earliest origin of medical science, been subjected to the dissector's knife; and their situations, forms, structures, and uses, have been so repeatedly demonstrated by the anatomist and the physiologist, as to have produced a general and uniform concurrence of opinion in the accuracy of their explanations. But not so with the immaterial part of man. A great diversity of opinion has prevailed, and will continue to prevail, until some positive evidence can be adduced, that will not admit of a difference of construction.

Perhaps no author contributed more to harmonize those conflicting opinions, and to concentrate public opinion in his favor, than the celebrated JOHN LOCKE. But already have some of his errors been demonstrated and refuted, and some of his favorite theories been compelled to yield to others. I will briefly advert to a few of his prominent errors. He denies the existence of innate ideas, and ascribes all our knowledge to ideas derived entirely from sensation and reflection. He also considers the mind as a *tabula rasa*, or blank sheet of paper, susceptible of any impressions that may chance first to be made upon its surface.

The following passages from Locke's essay, will more fully explain his own views. He says:

'I doubt not but to show that man, by the right use of his natural abilities, may, without any innate principles, attain a knowledge of a God, and other things concerning him, and may arrive at certainty, without any such original notions or principles.'

'Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper, and void of all characters, without ideas, how comes it to be furnished? Whence has it all the materials of reason and knowledge? To this I answer, in one word, from experience. In that all our knowledge is founded, and from that it ultimately derives itself. Methinks the understanding is not unlike a closet wholly shut from light, with only some little opening left, to let in external visible resemblances or ideas of things without.'

'The great source of most of the ideas we have depending wholly

upon our senses, and derived by them from the understanding, I call sensation. The other fountain, from experience, furnishes the understanding with ideas, is the perception of the operation of our own minds within us, as it is employed about the ideas it has got. I call this reflection. These two are, to me, the only originals from whence all our ideas take their beginnings.'

With regard to the moral duties, he says: 'I doubt not but without being written on their hearts, many men may, by the same way that they come to the knowledge of other things, come to assent to several moral rules, and be convinced of their obligation, which persuasion, however got, will serve to set conscience at work.'

The doctrines here advanced by Locke, however unintentionally on his part, have led to skepticism, and have furnished Hume and other skeptics with arguments in favor of the absurdities of the ideal system, to the total exclusion of the existence of matter. In developing my own views on this subject, I shall endeavor to show that these opinions are unfounded.

Notwithstanding the variety of opinions that have been successively advanced upon the faculties and operations of the human mind, very little of importance has yet been added to the discoveries of Aristotle and Plato. Pioneers in the science of mind, they were guided by their own genius to a more successful discovery of truth than many of their more enlightened successors. Imagination had not then fabricated so many baseless hypotheses, as subsequently distinguished those ages of the world, more famed for learning and science.

I shall now proceed to give my own views on this subject, for which I claim no farther credence than as they may consist with reason and with truth, and be sustained by facts, and by satisfactory evidence. Preparatory to more detailed explanations, I now submit the following propositions, as comprehending the fundamental principles of this theory:

I. Man consists of three distinct entities:

Body, Soul, and Mind.

II. The ideas of sensation are those carnal ideas which constitute the animal propensities, and which we derive, in common with other animals, from the five senses.

III. The intellectual, and moral, and religious ideas, which some philosophers ascribe to reflection, and to innate principles, are derived entirely and exclusively from the soul. In the soul is held the high court of chancery, denominated conscience, or the moral sense.

IV. When the soul operates upon the brain, it produces what may be denominated a *moral mind*, endowed with intellectual and religious faculties; and until excited to action by this operation, the faculties of the brain remain perfectly dormant.

V. When the senses operate upon the brain, they produce what may be denominated *sensual mind*, which man possesses in common with the inferior animals, but which is essentially changed and improved by the accession of the soul to the body.

I now proceed to consider the first proposition, that man consists of three distinct entities; body, soul, and mind. This proposition constitutes the fundamental principle by which all the others are sustained.

In searching for proof in the authority of names to sustain this proposition, I looked in vain to the publications of metaphysical authors. I have consulted theologians and professors of mental science in literary institutions, without being able to obtain any satisfactory information. All seemed to concur in the opinion that the mind and soul are identically the same.

I therefore resolved to abandon this course of investigation, and to direct my researches to that Volume alone, which reveals the occult mysteries of the world of spirits. And here I found the following command:

‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.’

This command was issued by that very Being who made man; who breathed into him, and he became a living soul; who spake as never man spake; who is the word of truth, and from whose lips streams of instruction incessantly flowed.

This appropriate text, emanating from such high authority, and from one who never spoke in vain, arrested my attention, shed a gleam of light over the science of mind, and by deep and continued reflection on the important truth it contained, dissipated my doubts, and almost entirely dispersed the dense obscurity in which this science appeared to be enshrouded. The positive distinction here made between the soul and the mind, pours a flood of valuable information upon the latter, and develops sources of ideas never before suggested. It subverts the basis of many absurd hypotheses, explains phenomena hitherto unintelligible, and conducts us to a clear and perspicuous view of the science of mind.

I am aware, at the same time, that this construction will naturally suggest the following reflections: Can this be true, and not have arrested the attention of a Locke, a Reid, a Stewart, a Brown, and

other eminent philosophers, who possessed the same evidence, and whose long and untiring investigations were assiduously directed to the same object? Is it possible that a text so full of meaning, so plain, intelligible, and expressive, and which will not admit of any other literal interpretation, could have escaped the notice of all philosophical inquirers after truth, from the time it was first recorded, to the present period? Were not the repetition of soul and mind intended merely as an amplification, to impress the subject deeper and more permanently upon the mind?"

These and similar reflections induced me for a long time to hesitate, and almost to doubt the evidence of my own senses. But the more I reflected and investigated, the stronger were my convictions of the truth of the construction which I had conceived. Regardless, therefore, of consequences to myself, and of the criticisms of a censorious world, I resolved to persevere, to sustain and promulge a truth so important to a correct view of the science of mind, and even at the risk of a collision with a system of philosophy sustained by illustrious names, and sanctioned by the experience of ages. I was also aware that I should have to combat that pride of opinion which never yields to innovators — neither principles nor discoveries that have not been sanctioned by time, or by the highest authorities in science; without which sanction, legitimately conferred, error must be error still.

The spirit of truth has pronounced the distinction between soul and mind in a command equally clear and positive, as when he said 'Let there be light.' Both rest on the same immutable basis; both are equally perspicuous, and unsusceptible of a figurative, or any other construction, than those simple words are intended plainly to convey; and whoever denies the one, may with the same propriety reject the other. It is a remarkable fact, in corroboration of the theory I am endeavoring to sustain, that the arrangement of the three entities in this text, is precisely the same which this theory assigns to each in their successive origins. The body is first formed with its five senses, each of which goes into full operation as they successively become matured; the soul next occupies its destined station in the body, and by its appropriate action on the brain, produces the mind.

We have then body, soul, and mind, arranged in the order of their creation, and perfectly corresponding to the arrangement adopted in the mandate of Christ. I was not aware of the reason of this arrangement, till long after this theory had been formed; and now simply make the allusion, to evince the perfect coincidence of every important circumstance in the illustration of truth.

‘But,’ says the objector, ‘this order in the text is a mere undesignated contingency.’

‘Who art thou, O man, that judgest?’ With man, I admit such might have been the fact; but not with God. Our Creator does not so instruct his creatures. He leaves nothing to a contingency. He has a design in all his works, by which to illustrate his own existence, the works of creation, and the mysterious work of redemption.

This argument may be farther illustrated by the following mandate: ‘Let us make man in our own image.’

It is the creed of a great proportion of the Christian world, that divinity consists of three distinct *entities*, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. If the opinion be correct that man consists of only two parts, how can he be made perfectly to resemble, in all respects, the image of the triune God? Consistency would require Trinitarians at least to reject an hypothesis so much at variance with their faith, and adopt the opinion that man, like his great Creator, consists of three distinct entities, and is made in all respects, both physical and moral, in the perfect image of the Deity.

I am at the same time aware, that the construction generally given to this passage makes the allusion refer exclusively to the moral image of God. But this limits his operations to a scale incongruous with the infinity of his nature. His image, in all its constituent and moral parts, is impressed not only on man, but on every part of creation. This is perfectly in accordance with the moral government of the universe, every portion of which is susceptible of spiritual interpretation, with a direct typical reference to the Deity. That his image is impressed upon all his works, adds much cogency to the argument, and is a beautiful illustration of the instruction which it furnishes of the existence of the Deity, and of his superintending providence.

The argument also acquires additional confirmation from that great spiritual philosopher, Saint Paul, in the following passage: ‘That which may be known of God, is manifest in them, for the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.’

This is decisive proof that man is created in a perfect resemblance of the Deity, and that by attentively observing the component parts of man, we may arrive at a correct knowledge of the component parts of God.

The body of man represents the Son, the soul the Father, and the mind the Holy Ghost. A still stronger likeness may be found in their respective actions. As the soul, operating upon the brain, pro-

duces the mind, so the Father, by the operation of his own will, produces the Holy Ghost. Those who disbelieve in the Trinity, for the single reason that they cannot comprehend the existence of three distinct beings in one person, by studying the complex nature of man in the aspect herein represented, must be convinced that the same complex existence of God is perfectly reconcileable to reason and to common sense. And they will also perceive how clearly the invisible things of him may be understood, by the visible things that are made; how perfectly symbolical man represents the image of his Creator.

Another argument may be derived from the following consideration : It has always been an embarrassing question, how far man is responsible for acts committed in a state of mental derangement, and under what degree of derangement that accountability would entirely cease.

The soul, being a distinct entity, can never be affected by a derangement of the mind : being the source of all intellectual, moral, and religious faculties, its moral responsibilities will remain undiminished through every vicissitude to which the human mind may be subjected. The mind is the only part that suffers derangement ; and being distinct from the soul, can never affect its moral condition, but is always liable to participate in the sufferings of the body, and to be influenced by its morbid changes.

It is a maxim in philosophy, that whatever most satisfactorily explains all the phenomena of any natural event, may safely be assumed as a principle of truth. I am perfectly willing to have this system tried, to stand or fall, by this single test, without any reference to the arguments that have already been adduced in its support.

I shall now proceed to apply this text, and to demonstrate the practical effect of this theory, by attempting to unfold the various operations by which ideas are produced on this principle. And I trust that a suitable application of this principle will elucidate this branch of the subject, and divest it of that obscurity and ambiguity to which it has hitherto been subjected, by the diversity of opinions and hypotheses which characterize the systems now before the public.

The body is an inert mass, endowed with organs peculiarly adapted to every useful occupation, and when excited into vital action, these organs transmit to the nerves correspondent animation. Through the media of these nerves communicating with external objects, and a simultaneous operation upon the brain, ideas are derived from the senses, and from thence transmitted to, and lodged in, the brain.

The first ideas we receive, are derived mostly from the sense of touch. I wish it here to be distinctly understood, that all the ideas derived from the senses are located together in a particular part of the brain, and are denominated sensual or animal propensities, and are precisely of the same class of ideas which the inferior animals derive from the same source. And until the soul assumes its residence in the brain, and exerts its influence over that organ, the infant possesses no distinctive faculties of mind, superior to the brutes. These sensual ideas are clustered together in a part of the brain entirely distinct from that portion which is occupied by ideas arising from other sources.

The sensual ideas are the source of those appetites, desires, and affections, which contain all the germs of vice with which human nature is afflicted. From these roots emanate hatred, malice, rage, revenge, and all the kindred passions, which give origin to cruelty, ferocity, murder, and systematic warfare. But without these natural impulses, reason would be incompetent to provide for the preservation of the individual, and the continuance of the species.

The perversion of these appetites, so necessary for our preservation and happiness, gives rise to intemperance, and the various modifications of sensual indulgences. By thus prostituting his nobler and higher endowments to such sensual gratifications, man degrades the dignity of his nature, and sinks beneath the brutes. But when the soul commences its operation upon the brain, and extends and continually exerts its influence, all its congeries of organs partake of this new vitality, and the mind also assumes a new and more elevated existence, with all its faculties and propensities strongly impressed with the intellectual, moral, and religious influence which this new inhabitant exerts over the evil tendencies of its natural propensities. Man now becomes perfect and entire, with body, soul, and mind, and so continues to exist, as long as the soul continues its destined influence over the brain. But when this influence is suspended or destroyed, by disease or violence, the faculties of the mind become deranged, suspended, or cease to exist. This subject acquires additional illustration from recent discoveries in the science of phrenology. All who have acquired a competent knowledge of this science, uniformly concur in the opinion that all the intellectual, moral, and religious faculties which arise from the soul, are located in the anterior and superior portion of the brain. And that all the sensual and animal propensities, which arise from the senses, are located in the posterior and inferior portion of the same organ. According to the principles sustained in this system, the soul alone

brings to the brain all the intellectual, moral, and religious faculties which it is known to possess. I trust therefore it will not be deemed arrogance in me to deduce, from these premises, the precise point of location where the soul assumes its actual and permanent residence. These deductions fully justify the opinion that the soul occupies only the superior and anterior portion of the brain, where these faculties are found to exist.

The relative position which the faculties of the soul and the animal propensities thus hold toward each other, is admirably arranged to carry on that systematic warfare, which is said by the apostle to be incessantly waged by the latter against the former; and is also strongly emblematic of their respective characters.

The animal propensities, low, grovelling, and deceptive, in perfect consonance with their prominent traits of character, occupy that inferior and posterior portion of the brain, by which they may be most effectually shielded, and under which they may conceal and prosecute most successfully their insidious assaults upon the soul. While the latter, from its elevated and dignified position, looks down upon its assailants with pity, shielded only from their assaults by the panoply of conscious rectitude.

From the preceding remarks, it will now be perceived that I sustain the position, that the intellectual, moral, and religious faculties exist primarily and exclusively in the soul; and that all the sensual or animal propensities arise entirely and exclusively from the body; hence the former are termed in Scripture 'spiritual,' and the latter 'carnal.' In proportion, then, as volition brings the soul into close affinity with the brain, will the intellectual and moral faculties more or less predominate.

The soul does not, like the mind, acquire knowledge by experience and education, but comes to its habitation in the body replete with perfect intuitive knowledge, which it gradually communicates to the mind, as circumstances facilitating such communications may be more or less propitious. It may hence be easily inferred, that the soul constitutes that new source of ideas to which I have already alluded, and which will subsequently be explained.

By what process the soul acquires its ideas, and this perfect intuitive knowledge, is a question which man in his corporeal existence can never answer nor comprehend. It can be understood only when we, disembodied, arrive in that spiritual kingdom, where soul meets soul, under the immediate dominion of the 'King, eternal, immortal, invisible.' Then shall we know as we are known, and be able to solve the questions which here receive no satisfactory reply.

However difficult it may be clearly to comprehend the preceding proposition, it may be more perfectly elucidated, if we are permitted to consider the soul to be an infinitesimal part of Deity; and I am not conscious of any very solid objections to the assumption of this ground. At the same time, I am aware that even the suggestion will be met with objections of the most solemn character, and perhaps with the asseverations of profanity. Such arguments I conceive to be more sophistical than solid, and better calculated to prolong an unprofitable controversy, than to produce conviction, or any decisive result. I shall therefore make no farther allusion to such objections, but merely add a few remarks in vindication of this course.

The universe is filled with the Spirit of God. No portion of it can for a moment be supposed to be destitute of his actual presence. When, therefore, God breathed into man, and he became a living soul, will it be said that this was a new creation, or a portion of that spirit which pervades the universe? We must also consider that spirit is only another word for breath; and that the sentence might very properly be rendered thus: 'God breathed into man his spirit; and he became a living soul.' This also designates the precise time when the soul is received into the body; for as with the breath of the Creator, his spirit was imparted to the first man, so we may conclusively infer that the soul is imparted to the infant with its first inspiration.

Another figurative allusion to the creation of man, 'the rock from which he had been hewed,' fortifies the opinion that the soul is an emanation from his Creator. Sustained by these and other arguments that might be adduced, I shall assume the position that the soul is an infinitesimal part of Deity, without any reference to consequences that might be urged in its refutation: although I deem it perfectly immaterial to the issue of this theory, whether the soul be a new creation, or a part of Deity; as the power which creates, can, with equal facility, render it perfect in either case.

The ways of God are beyond our comprehension, and to His wisdom do we submit the results, without attempting to reconcile them with the very limited views which we are permitted to take of his plans and operations. We can only say with David: 'We are fearfully and wonderfully made!'

I assume only what appears to be the clear and obvious construction of the Bible, as the basis of the theory which I have endeavored to sustain. Beyond this I cannot presume to go. I cannot enter the confines of fancy, and adopt the interminable productions and absurd hypotheses of creative imaginations. Fortunate would it have been

for the cause of science, had the wisdom of preceding ages erected its structures upon the same infallible and enduring basis.

I therefore conclude that we are amply sustained, by the evidence already adduced, in ascribing to the soul perfect intuitive knowledge, derived immediately from the Deity, together with all its intellectual ideas, inherent seeds of virtue, morality, and religion. Why, then, it may be inquired, does not the mind of the infant become perfect in knowledge the moment the soul takes its residence in the brain? I trust the following remarks will be a satisfactory reply to this inquiry.

The Creator has so constituted man, that he must be progressive in all his mental and corporeal developments, and in all their approaches to maturity. The brain of the infant is so extremely delicate in its structure, as to be incompetent to sustain the sudden and full operation of the perfect and mature soul. But few of its organs are at first sufficiently developed, to receive impressions. The faculties of the mind, therefore, which are first manifested, are of the most simple character; and as the organs acquire additional energy and strength, the other more mature and complex faculties become successively developed, so as ultimately to receive the full operation and impressions of the soul.

In perfect accordance with this explanation, the history of Christ does not furnish us with any satisfactory evidence that he manifested, while an infant, any powers of intellect far exceeding the puerilities of a child. This explanation may be more clearly elucidated by a reference to the first man. The body of Adam, in all its parts and organs, was perfect and mature, when his soul was received from his Creator. Consequently his knowledge was not progressively acquired. But being perfect and mature in body, the soul came at once in perfect contact with all those organs of the brain which it was destined to occupy, and to which it instantly communicated intellectual and moral faculties, in their highest state of perfection. Man was, then, made perfect in body, perfect in soul, perfect in mind, and perfect in holiness; literally resembling the image of his Creator, in all his moral and constituent parts.

If any are disposed to controvert this position, and to affirm that the soul is destitute of intelligence, of intellectual and moral faculties, until it has effected an intimate union with those organs of the brain where those faculties are developed, a simple reference to the most conclusive testimony every where exhibited in the Bible, the only authority in existence on this point, of the intelligence manifested by angelic and other disembodied spirits, in their communica-

tions to man, and with each other, is amply sufficient to place this question forever at rest.

So frequently repeated is this evidence, and so well known to every believer in divine revelation, that a reference to particular instances would be a useless occupation of time. I may here observe, that all information and facts relating to the world of spirits, derived from any source counter to divine revelation, must rest upon a false basis. Where is the man that has lived in that spiritual world, and returned to instruct corporeal beings in the nature, character, and faculties of the souls which dwell there? But there is One, who not only dwells there, but rules as its absolute sovereign, over that spiritual region, who has condescended to instruct man in the mysteries of that portion of his empire, which are necessary for his happiness. Is it not, then, a species of insanity to abandon this only source of truth, and to resort to the theories of unaided reason, as manifested in the writings of Aristotle and Plato? Yet with this light brilliantly illuminating their path, ever since the commencement of the Christian era, have philosophers sought the light of truth among the dark recesses of heathen philosophy. Error has thus been based on error, until the whole superstructure exhibits, in a beautiful exterior, specimens of refined taste and exquisite art, but without that material necessary to constitute symmetry, strength, and duration.

If the soul be the fountain from which the mind derives all its streams of intellectual and moral science, the opinions advocated by Locke and others, that all ideas originate from sensation and reflection, must be unfounded. What possible use can metaphysicians ascribe to the soul, the only intellectual part of man? Can it for a moment be admitted, that although perfect, it acquires all its ideas from its union with an inert, inanimate body? The manner in which ideas originate from the senses has already been explained; but how ideas of morality and religion can, by any mode or power of reflection, be generated from the combined operation of the five senses, is to me an obscure mystery. Neither can I understand how ideas arising entirely from sensation, can ever arrive at those sublime intellectual attainments, which unfold the laws of creation, embrace the universe, scan the heavens, penetrate the world of spirits, and ascend to a knowledge of that great supreme of all spirits, the omnipotent, the omniscient God.

Although this opinion has been advocated, and confidently affirmed, by that profound philosopher, John Locke, it is evidently at variance with correct observation and strong facts. Ideas arising entirely and exclusively from the senses, can never, by any human power, be

extended beyond the objects of sense. The sense of touch can generate no other ideas than those which arise from those external objects, which come in contact with that sense.

Such ideas may, by comparison or reflection, ascertain the various qualities of the objects to which this sense has been applied, and which come within its powers of investigation, and may also compare these with ideas derived from the other senses. But there their powers end. The sense of smelling may ascertain the peculiar odors of all bodies, and may compare the ideas arising from that source with each other, and also with those arising from the other four senses. But there its faculties also terminate. The faculties and operations of all the other senses are subjected to the same laws, and restricted to the same limits.

But from which of the senses can any moral or religious ideas originate? Or can any such results be generated by the combined action of all the ideas of sensation, with their very limited powers of reflection, in grand council convened? No; ages might roll away, in a vain search for knowledge so infinitely exceeding their highest conceptions! The soul must come to impart to the mind the sources from which all this knowledge is derived. And without this knowledge, man is not superior to the brutes. He sees, feels, hears, smells, and tastes, in common with them; and all his reasoning powers are, like theirs, limited to the proper objects which are designed to gratify those senses, and to preserve life. This is the mode of reasoning peculiar to all animals destitute of a soul; and so far as the gratification of the senses, and the preservation of life, are concerned, they reason more correctly than man. So rapid is this process performed in their minds, and so correct and instantaneous are the conclusions at which they arrive, and so far exceeding similar powers in man, that it has been considered to be the effect of a divine influence, denominated instinct; a faculty which no one can understand.

A variety of reasons might be assigned to explain these extraordinary powers in brutes. The preservation of their lives, and the gratification of their appetites, absorb their whole attention; and their mental faculties, being exclusively and constantly exercised upon these objects, acquire a high degree of activity, and impart to their nerves an acuteness of discernment, which enables them to avoid noxious articles, and to select those only which administer to their wants, and to their sustenance.

As a substitute for their privation of the higher intellectual powers, their nervous system has been originally endowed with an extreme sensitive acuteness, on which all their reasoning powers depend; and

by the degree of this acuteness, may those powers be accurately graduated. The mind of man being occupied with nobler and more elevated themes, often neglects to attend to the dictates of those senses which direct to the means of self-preservation, and in this respect may be considered inferior to other animals. Facts in corroboration of this exposition daily occur under our notice, and might be cited *ad libitum*. The elephant exhibits a striking instance of this fact; the extremity of whose trunk is supplied with more nerves than the whole of his huge body beside. He consequently possesses a faculty of discriminating, so extremely acute and sensitive, and so far exceeding that of other animals, as to be denominated the 'half-reasoning elephant.'

Although Locke is opposed to the admission of innate ideas, others have assumed the opposite ground, and advocated their præexistence, with ability and success; but appear utterly at a loss to account for their precise location, or their origin, or the mode of their existence, and the means by which they may be excited to action. A reference to the opinions of a few prominent authors, in their own words, will exhibit a more explicit detail of their views, their difficulties, and their unsuccessful efforts to divest this subject of its intrinsic mysteries. In contrast with their confused views on this subject, I shall then endeavor to explain the perfect consistency of innate ideas with the theory sustained in this essay, and to evince how easily all these difficulties and mysteries may be dissipated, and the whole subject rendered perfectly clear and intelligible.

STEWART says: 'Locke was guilty of great error, in deducing the origin of all our knowledge from sensation and reflection, and also in denying the existence of innate ideas, and in asserting that our ideas of morality and religion are the result of education and experience. The sciences rest ultimately on first principles, which must be taken for granted, without proof.'

BOYLE says: 'God has furnished man either with certain innate ideas, or with models and principles, or with a faculty to frame them: The innate light of the rational faculty is more primary than the rules of reasoning.'

DR. REID: 'The first principles of every kind of reasoning are given us by nature. The conclusions of reason are built on first principles. How or when I got such first principles, I know not, for I had them before I can remember.'

DR. WATTS: 'It is our knowledge of truths which are wrought into the very nature and make of our minds. They are too evident to need proof. They are thought to be innate propositions, or truths born with us.'

Dr. BEATTIE: 'That all mathematical truth is founded on certain first principles, which common sense or instinct compels us to believe without proof. Hence there is a power in the mind which perceives elementary truth, and commands implicit belief by instinctive impulse derived from nature.'

Dr. HANCOCK: 'I therefore conclude that the elements, or first principles, of reasoning belong to every rational being, and that we cannot attain speculative knowledge, without building our reasoning on certain rational instincts, or first principles. So we cannot attain to any practical virtue, without building on the fundamental principles of morality and religion, originally laid in the mind by God.'

LORD BACON: 'The light of nature shines upon the soul by an internal instinct, according to the law of conscience, by which it is enabled to discover the perfection of the moral law.'

SIR MATTHEW HALE: 'By his faculties man is enabled to know the will of God, for it is in a great measure inscribed in his soul. Our clearest and best sentiments of morality have been gathered from a due animadversion of our own minds, next to divine revelation.'

Dr. CUDWORTH: 'The soul is not a mere *tabula rasa*, a naked, passive thing, which has no innate furniture or activity of its own. The anticipations of morality spring from some inward vital principle in intellectual beings.'

From these extracts, it will be perceived that many of the most eminent metaphysicians concur in the belief of innate ideas, or first principles, without being able to account for their origin. But if we admit the distinctive existence of the soul, and that it possesses all the intellectual, moral, and religious faculties, before its union with the body, we can easily understand the origin of innate ideas, their location, and mode of existence in the soul, and also the manner and means by which they are gradually and successively excited to action. These have already been explained.

The soul, in its approach to the brain, brings with it all those innate ideas, the origin, existence, and location of which have so mysteriously embarrassed the scientific world. And as the organs which these faculties are destined to occupy become successively developed, and matured to receive impressions, without the hazard of being disorganized, they become more or less manifest, according to concurring circumstances. This is that class of innate ideas which communicates to us the first intelligence we ever receive of the being of a God, and of the necessity of living a holy and a religious life. These impressions are deepened by subsequent observation of his works, and above all by Divine revelation.

It must here be distinctly understood, that the ideas of a God and of religion are not in the first instance acquired by education and experience, but are derived entirely and exclusively from the soul ; which, according to the explanation already given, is perfect in all its intellectual, moral, and religious faculties.

The senses also produce impressions on the brain of the fœtus before birth, which constitute another source of innate ideas. On this principle, the much controverted question relative to the origin of virtue and vice, and the predisposition of infants to the latter, may be satisfactorily explained.

The following remarks of Dr. HUTCHINSON, in relation to this topic, accord with the views of other philosophers, and are too appropriate to be omitted. He says : ‘ It is an arduous task to trace virtue to its original source, whether it comes to man by nature, or by custom and education, or by some divine instinct. Many eminent philosophers admit that we have innate seeds of virtue. The seeds of virtue do not show themselves so early as the seeds of vice, whatever may be the advantage of outward good example. For as that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is animal, and afterward that which is spiritual, so it may be consistent with the right order of things, that the animal, sensual, or inferior propensities, should appear before the moral or spiritual. We know not why the latter noble principles should appear in the infant, before it has discovered one spark of intellect. The following is the regular order in the scale of intellect : a sensitive, an animal, an intellectual, and moral state, is gradually unfolded. The propensities which appear first, are not so excellent as those which appear last.’

All seem to concur with Dr. Hutchinson in the opinion just quoted, that vice precedes virtue in the order of time ; but none have accounted for the fact why it should so occur ; nor have they satisfactorily explained the predisposition of infants to vice.

I will now proceed to exhibit the facility with which this theory will elucidate this intricate subject, divest it of all mystery, and place it on the plain and simple ground of other physical operations.

I have already explained the manner in which ideas originate from the senses ; that they are the first in the order of existence, and consequently make the first impressions on the brain ; and that originating entirely from the body, they may with propriety be denominated sensual, or, in the language of Scripture, carnal. These ideas, thus originating from the flesh, contain all the germs of vice, so subversive of human felicity ; and when transmitted to, and lodged in the brain, constitute the sensual mind, in contradistinction to the moral mind, which is derived from the soul.

The sensual mind, thus originating from the five senses, and being the first in the order of time, makes the first impressions upon the brain ; and as vice is the product of the sensual mind, and most congenial to its nature, the mind of the infant becomes thereby predisposed to vice, and to all its train of evils, before the moral mind is sufficiently matured to counteract its baleful influence.

How long this influence has been exerted, and how deep these impressions have been made, before the counter agents from the soul begin to operate, we can never ascertain. But that they are settled and radicated, accords with experience, and is confirmed by facts. And until the soul, by the efforts of volition, is brought to exert its influence to eradicate the impressions already made, the predisposition to vice will continue to increase, and to grow stronger and deeper, until advanced age shall render it perfectly insensible to the counter influence of the soul. It can then be eradicated only by the miraculous power of the Almighty. Thus verifying the Scripture : 'The sinner of a hundred years old shall be accursed.'

The order in the preceding scale of intellect, by Dr. Hutchinson, is perfectly consistent with the explanation I have already given of innate ideas, and is good authority in support of this theory. The same principles are equally applicable to explain the origin of virtue and vice. The first in his scale, the sensitive state, arises from the sense of touch, and is the first idea transmitted to the brain of the fœtus. The animal state is the result of the other senses, as they successively commence operation ; thus, when complete, constituting the perfect sensual mind, the origin of all vice. His second and third, the intellectual and moral state, arrive with the soul, and do not commence operation upon the brain, until respiration has commenced, and the sensual mind has made considerable progress toward its complete formation. This arrival of the soul constitutes the inceptive stage of the moral mind, the origin of all virtue, which is gradually unfolded in all its faculties, as the different organs of the brain become developed, which it is destined to occupy, and as the body approaches its mature and perfect state.

The preceding remarks relate to the mind in its sane and healthy condition. A few brief reflections will show how satisfactorily the sane principles may be applied to explain the operations of the mind under the influence of disease.

It is not my intention, at present, to proceed to a detailed exposition of the causes and treatment of insanity, but merely to indicate a few general principles that may be applied to preserve the health and to prevent the disease of the mind.

The radical difference in the intellectual faculties of men is not so great as the difference in the means which they employ for their respective improvement in knowledge. It was a common remark of Sir Isaac Newton, that if he possessed any advantage over others, it consisted entirely in his ability to control his attention. This is literally true, and is the grand secret by which the most eminent and most scientific men have acquired their highest attainments, and their prominent distinction in the world. The reason is very obvious. Those who abstract their attention from extraneous subjects, and concentrate it entirely and exclusively upon the objects of their study, will arrive at the highest possible attainments in science.

By extending this controlling influence to all the faculties of the soul, ideas which had been long dormant, and of the existence of which the mind had become unconscious, will be excited to renewed and vigorous action. The soul, with all its faculties, will be thus brought into a more intimate approximation to, and alliance with, the organs of the brain, and will consequently impart to the mind that peculiar species of intellectual, moral, or religious science, which the will makes the greatest efforts to obtain. And if its exertions operate with equal force upon all these faculties, the individual will thereby acquire the reputation of being not only a great and wise man, but also of being a good man, devoted to objects of piety and benevolence. The mind, like the body, requires constant and regular exercise, to preserve its healthy condition; and if suitably controlled by the will, its health and its sanity will continue to be preserved, until they are impaired by the infirmities incident to declining life. All its faculties will then be in equal and regular action. Antagonist agents will never permit this balance to be disturbed, while they are unaffected by disease. This constitutes the most healthy and sane condition of the mind; and may always be found most perfect in those eminent men who are most distinguished for a high moral intellect, but destitute of this moral restraint; men of the highest intellectual attainments are most liable to paroxysms of insanity.

When this equanimity is disturbed, and this harmony of action destroyed, by any adequate cause, a discordance in the operation of the faculties occurs, which gradually impairs the sanity of the mind, and ultimately terminates in confirmed derangement.

It will therefore be perceived that the preceding remarks justify the conclusion, that the same test which designates a great and good mind, will equally designate its most sane and healthy condition.

I consider the will to be the supreme arbiter of this epitome of the universe. It sits enthroned in regal majesty, dispensing its man-

dates through all the minute ramifications of its complicated empire. If these mandates are wisely conceived, and faithfully executed, by the subordinate agents which are permanently stationed at their respective posts; if the will brings the soul, with all its faculties, into complete and extensive operation upon the brain; all the departments of its government will be equally and justly balanced, and the respective powers of each department will be retained within their own spheres of action.

This condition of mind is best adapted to promote the happiness and the usefulness of the individual who possesses it. But the least deviation from this standard will mar this happiness, impair this usefulness, and induce disorder and discord; all of which evils will continue to accumulate and to multiply, precisely as the will loses its influence, or is influenced by bad motives, or ceases to control the attention and all the faculties of the soul.

The first symptoms which indicate the gradual approaches to insanity, are seldom observed: they are often denominated eccentricities of character, without the least suspicion of mental disease, and are characterized by a vacillating state of mind; a rapid transition of thought from one thing to another; an inability to confine the attention, for any length of time, to one subject. This disposition continues to increase, till it terminates in an incessant wandering of the mind.

The imagination then usurps the place of the understanding, and presents to the mind a thousand fanciful paintings, which the fancy endows with life and animation, and which it occasionally converts into castles, animals, and armies. Those persons who are in the habit of permitting their thoughts to rove at random, with no fixed object on which to concentrate, and without exerting any efforts to arrest their unmeaning current, or to subject them to the control of the will, are always liable to become insane. It is therefore very obvious that the remedial means necessary to prevent this deplorable occurrence, in its incipient stage, must be sought for in an entire removal of the remote and exciting causes. This habitual roving of the current of thought must be arrested, and brought, by habitual and strict discipline, into a regular train of moral reflections, steadily directed to one subject. The will must resume its authority, and exert all its efforts to control the attention, and to subdue all the faculties of the soul to its sovereign power. Such a course of remedial treatment, prudently and judiciously administered, will arrest the progress of the disease in its incipient stage, prevent its ultimate distressing termination, and restore to his anxious friends one who,

without these precautionary measures, might have become a perfect maniac; a tenant of the asylum; an outcast from the world.

I have now arrived at the completion of a very imperfect outline of a system of mental science, which I feel fully assured will most satisfactorily explain the mysteries connected with the immaterial part of man. That I have succeeded in producing an equal conviction in the minds of others, I can scarcely venture to hope. And indeed I have no desire to produce such conviction, unless this system shall ultimately be found to rest on the immutable basis of truth.

But before the critic dips his pen in gall, I earnestly solicit him to bestow all his attention upon this view of the subject, until, by diligent investigation, he shall acquire a perfect knowledge of all the facts, authorities, and evidence, on which it is founded, and shall also clearly perceive the facility and perspicuity with which the appropriate details may explain and develop the occult mysteries of the science of mind; and if he can then, unprejudiced and in perfect candor, pronounce its principles to rest on a false basis, and shall sustain the charge, and effectually demolish the whole fabric, by sound arguments, supported by facts, I will promptly retract my error, and cheerfully bestow upon him my warmest gratitude and most profound admiration.

But if the fundamental principles of this system shall survive the assaults of the critic, and receive the sanction of public opinion, the subject will be resumed and pursued through all the variety of details connected with the immaterial part of man, until the extensive field inclosed by this outline shall be fully occupied. And I trust that a new era in the philosophy of mind will thus be commenced, which abler talents will cultivate and improve, until the whole system of mental science shall be divested of all mystery, and so clearly elucidated and simplified, that both the material and immaterial parts of man shall be rendered equally susceptible of demonstrative proof.

